DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 413 095 PS 025 962

AUTHOR Newman, Sally; Marks, Ronald
TITLE Children's Views on Aging.
INSTITUTION Pittsburgh Univ., PA. Generations Together.
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 43p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Aging (Individuals); *Attitude Measures; *Childhood Attitudes; *Children; Elementary Education; Grandparents; Older Adults; Rating Scales; Semantic Differential; Stereotypes

ABSTRACT

This manual for the Children's Views on Aging (CVOA) questionnaire describes the instrument and administration and scoring procedures, details the analyses used in a study of childhood attitudes toward aging, and discusses instrument development. The CVOA is comprised of six sections. Section 1 elicits information about the cognitive and emotional components of children's beliefs about aging. Section 2 asks children to give information on elderly people they actually know and their contact with them. Sections 3 and 6 consist of semantic differential scales to determine the range and content of children's stereotypes regarding older and younger people. Section 4 asks children to identify the oldest person they know, describe that person's feelings about being old, and describe their own relationships with grandparents and great-grandparents. Section 5 investigates children's attitudes regarding older persons as classroom resources. The CVOA may be given individually or in groups to students in grades 3 to 6. Sections 3 and 6 are especially useful when given as a pre-post assessment for students involved in intergenerational programs. Three appendices present response categories for the open-ended questions, analyses used for each question in a study of childhood attitudes toward aging, and information on how the instrument was developed. (Contains 13 references.) (KB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 413 095

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON AGING

Sally Newman, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Generations Together
Assistant Professor, School of Education
University of Pittsburgh

Ronald Marks, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Director, Doctoral Program in
School of Social Work
Tulane University

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Sally Newman
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Generations Together
Pittsburgh, PA

1997

PS 025962

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON AGING

Sally Newman, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Generations Together
Assistant Professor, School of Education
University of Pittsburgh

Ronald Marks, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Director, Doctoral Program in
School of Social Work
Tulane University

Generations Together
Pittsburgh, PA

1997

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank Robert Faux for his contribution in the preparation of this instrument. Thanks also to Generations Together staff, and in particular, Jonquil Feldman for bringing it to production.

Generations Together, a program of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Social and Urban Research, was established to promote mutually beneficial interaction between young and old. Generations Together develops innovative intergenerational programs; researches the impact of these programs on the participants; and provides technical assistance to other local, regional and national organizations.

Available from:
Generations Together
University Center for Social and Urban Research
University of Pittsburgh
121 University Place, Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
(412) 648-2209

INTRODUCTION

The Children's Views on Aging (CVOA) is an instrument designed to provide information about children's attitudes and values about the aging process and older people. The CVOA consists of open- and closed-ended questions, and semantic-differential scales that assess the emotional, cognitive, and conative dimensions of children's attitudes and values about aging.[1]

The CVOA consists of six sections. Section I provides information about the cognitive component of children's beliefs about aging. It contains open-ended questions that ask about the aging process and what it is like to be old. Each of the questions is followed by a closed-ended question that allows each child to evaluate his or her response to the previous question. This question will provide information on the emotional component of his or her beliefs. Following this section are questions that ask the child where she or he learned the information just provided.

In Section II children are asked to give information on older people they actually know: their names; how old the child thinks they are; how often they see them; and where they see them. This section offers information on children's actual contact with older adults.

Sections III and VI consist of semantic-differential scales. The purpose of the scales is to determine the range and content of children's stereotypic attitudes toward older and younger people. These scales consist of 11 bipolar sets of adjectives that could describe people of any age. For example: good-bad, ugly-pretty. Children respond to these 11 sets of adjectives on a five-point scale with responses reflecting their perceptions, ranging from positive to negative, using Very, A Little, and Not Sure as the descriptors. Therefore, on the five-point scale, with the polar pair, good-bad, a child would respond Good -- Very, A Little or Not Sure (positive) or Bad -- Very, A Little or Not Sure (negative).

In Section IV children are asked to identify the oldest person they know, give the person's age, and describe this person's feelings about being old. The remaining items in section IV refer to children's relationships with their grandparents and great-grandparents.

[1] The CVOA was developed by Marks (1980) for his dissertation research.

Children are asked about the frequency and type of contact they have with their grandparents and great-grandparents, and the types of activities they engage in when they are together. Finally, children are asked if they think their grandparents and great-grandparents are old.

To further determine children's beliefs about the elderly, Section V consists of three questions that ask if an older person would be a valuable resource in the classroom, as someone from whom the child could learn, and what might motivate an older person to come into the classroom.

To assess the conative component of children's attitudes, questions are posed that measure children's interest and willingness to interact with an older person in the classroom.

Administration of the CVOA

The CVOA may be administered individually or in groups. Testing should take place in a quiet, well-lit room.

The six sections of the CVOA should be administered in order, beginning with Section I and ending with Section VI. The scales in Sections III and VI are of particular value when administered twice, as a pre-post assessment before students are involved in an intergenerational program and at a point several months into program implementation.

The instructions are written in language appropriate for the children in grades 4, 5 and 6. The instructions are appropriate for third graders if they are read aloud and explained. This procedure may be followed for grades 4, 5, and 6 children as well.

Scoring the CVOA

The open-ended responses may be coded using the coding scheme developed by Marks (1980). There are 12 open-ended questions, each with response categories. Each category was formed with the understanding that they be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The categories were created through a random sample of pre-test responses. The response categories may be found in Appendix A.

Each answer choice for a closed-ended question will be given a numerical value. For example, the question , "How can you tell when people are growing old?" is followed by the close-ended question, "Do you think this is: a good thing to happen? a bad

thing to happen? neither good nor bad?" Each possible response will be given a numerical value of 1, 2, and 3 respectively. In this example, a positive response will result in a low score of 1, a neutral response will have a score of 2, and a negative response will have a high score of 3. These scores are then to be summed, and trends determined. Thus, a low score would indicate that a child has a positive attitude toward growing old and older people, and a high score would indicate a negative attitude.

The semantic differential scales in Sections III and VI are comprised of 11 adjective pairs that alternate between positive and negative descriptions of older and younger people. The child is asked to decide if one of the adjectives best describes older and younger people. Responses range from Very, A Little, Not Sure, A Little, Very, with each receiving a numerical value of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The scores are summed, and trends determined.

INSTRUCTIONS

To Persons Administering the

Children's Views on Aging (CVOA) Questionnaire

Children's Views on Aging (CVOA) is a validated instrument designed.

a) To help you gain some information on the views of children toward the aging process and toward older people.

b) To help you determine the impact of intergenerational programs on these views.

The instrument should be administered in a quiet, adequately illuminated room and may be administered to students individually or in groups.

The six sections of the questionnaire should be administered in numerical order, starting with Section I. The instructions are prepared in language appropriate for children in grades 4, 5, and 6. However, it is appropriate for grade 3 children, if the instructions are read aloud and explained. This may also be done for grades 4, 5, and 6 children.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

INSTRUCTIONS 4

SECTION I 5

SECTION II 8

SECTION III 9

SECTION IV 10

SECTION V 12

SECTION VI 14

APPENDIX A: SCORING 15

- SECTION I 15
- SECTION II 21
- SECTION III 22
- SECTION IV 22
- SECTION V 24
- SECTION VI 24

APPENDIX B: ANALYSES 25

APPENDIX C: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS 30

REFERENCES 34

INTRODUCTION

The Children's Views of Aging (CVOA) is an instrument designed to provide information about children's attitudes and values about the aging process and older people. The CVOA consists of open- and closed-ended questions, and semantic-differential scales that assess the emotional, cognitive, and conative dimensions of children's attitudes and values about aging.[1]

The CVOA consists of six sections. Section I provides information about the cognitive component of children's beliefs about aging. It contains open-ended questions that ask about the aging process and what it is like to be old. Each of the questions is followed by a closed-ended question that allows each child to evaluate his or her response to the previous question. This question will provide information on the emotional component of his or her beliefs. Following this section are questions that ask the child where she or he learned the information just provided.

In Section II children are asked to give information on older people they actually know: their names; how old the child thinks they are; how often they see them; and where they see them. This section offers information on children's actual contact with older adults.

Sections III and VI consist of semantic-differential scales. The purpose of the scales is to determine the range and content of children's stereotypic attitudes toward older and younger people. These scales consist of 11 bipolar sets of adjectives that could describe people of any age. For example: good-bad; ugly-pretty. Children respond to these 11 sets of adjectives on a five-point scale with responses reflecting their perceptions, ranging from positive to negative, using Very, A Little, and Not Sure as the descriptors. Therefore, on the five-point scale, with the polar pair, good-bad, a child would respond Good -- Very, A Little or Not Sure (positive) or Bad -- Very, A Little or Not Sure (negative).

In Section IV children are asked to identify the oldest person they know, give the person's age, and describe this person's feelings about being old. The remaining items in section IV refer to children's relationships with their grandparents and great-grandparents.

[1] The CVOA was developed by Marks (1980) for his dissertation research.

Children are asked about the frequency and type of contact they have with their grandparents and great-grandparents, and the types of activities they engage in when they are together. Finally, children are asked if they think their grandparents and great-grandparents are old.

To further determine children's beliefs about the elderly, Section V consists of three questions that ask if an older person would be a valuable resource in the classroom, as someone from whom the child could learn, and what might motivate an older person to come into the classroom.

To assess the conative component of children's attitudes, questions are posed that measure children's interest and willingness to interact with an older person in the classroom.

Administration of the CVOA

The CVOA may be administered individually or in groups. Testing should take place in a quiet, well-lit room.

The six sections of the CVOA should be administered in order, beginning with Section I and ending with Section VI. The scales in Sections III and VI are of particular value when administered twice, as a pre-post assessment before students are involved in an intergenerational program and at a point several months into program implementation.

The instructions are written in language appropriate for the children in grades 4, 5 and 6. The instructions are appropriate for third graders if they are read aloud and explained. This procedure may be followed for grades 4, 5, and 6 children as well.

Scoring the CVOA

The open-ended responses may be coded using the coding scheme developed by Marks (1980) There are 12 open-ended questions, each with response categories. Each category was formed with the understanding that they be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The categories were created through a random sample of pre-test responses. The response categories may be found in Appendix A.

Each answer choice for a closed-ended question will be given a numerical value. For example, the question , "How can you tell when people are growing old?" is followed by the close-ended question, "Do you think this is: a good thing to happen? a bad

thing to happen? neither good nor bad?" Each possible response will be given a numerical value of 1, 2, and 3 respectively. In this example, a positive response will result in a low score of 1, a neutral response will have a score of 2, and a negative response will have a high score of 3. These scores are then to be summed, and trends determined. Thus, a low score would indicate that a child has a positive attitude toward growing old and older people, and a high score would indicate a negative attitude.

The semantic differential scales in Sections III and VI are comprised of 11 adjective pairs that alternate between positive and negative descriptions of older and younger people. The child is asked to decide if one of the adjectives best describes older and younger people. Responses range from Very, A Little, Not Sure, A Little, Very, with each receiving a numerical value of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The scores are summed, and trends determined.

INSTRUCTIONS

To Persons Administering the

Children's Views of Aging (CVOA) Questionnaire

Children's Views of Aging (CVOA) is a validated instrument designed:

a) To help you gain some information on the views of children toward the aging process and toward older people.

b) To help you determine the impact of intergenerational programs on these views.

The instrument should be administered in a quiet, adequately illuminated room and may be administered to students individually or in groups.

The six sections of the questionnaire should be administered in numerical order, starting with Section I. The instructions are prepared in language appropriate for children in grades 4, 5, and 6. However, it is appropriate for grade 3 children, if the instructions are read aloud and explained. This may also be done for grades 4, 5, and 6 children.

SECTION I

Instructions (For Students)

The following questions ask you to think about becoming an old person. For most of these questions you will just need to write a few words. For some others you will need to circle the answer that tells what you think. If you have any questions raise your hand. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't worry if you cannot spell a word you want to use.

Name _____

School _____

Grade _____

Please check one: Are you: a Boy?_____ a Girl?_____

For the next eight questions you need to write a few words or circle the response you want to make. Be sure to answer each question.

1. a) How can you tell when people are growing old?

b) Do you think growing old is: (circle only one)

a good thing to happen? a bad thing to happen? neither good nor bad?

2. a) How do you think it feels to be an old person?

b) Do you think this: (circle only one)

feels good? feels bad? feels neither good nor bad?

3. a) What do you think happens when you get to be an old person?

b) Do you think this is (circle only one)

a good thing to happen? a bad thing to happen? neither a good nor a bad thing?

4. You have been answering questions about some of the things **you know about old people.** Now I would like to know where **you learned about old people.** Circle the one that tells where you think you learned the most. (Circle only one.)

a	television	e	your grandparents
b	movies	f	your friends
c	books	g	somewhere else
d	your parents		

5. **Now imagine that you are an old person.**

a) What do you think you will be like when you are old?

b) Do you think this will be: (Circle only one)

a good thing? a bad thing? neither good nor bad?

6. a) How do you think you will feel when you are old?

b) Do you think you will: (circle only one)

feel good? feel bad? feel neither good nor bad?

7. a) What do you think you will do when you are old?

b) Do you think doing this will be: (circle only one)

a good thing to do? a bad thing to do? neither good nor bad?

8. You have just answered some questions about what you think you will be **like** and what you think you will **do** when you are an old person. Now I would like to know **where you learned about becoming old**. Circle the one that tells where you think you learned the most. (Circle only one.)

a.	television	e.	your grandparents
b.	movies	f.	your friends
c.	books	g.	somewhere else
d.	your parents		

SECTION II

Think of some of the old people you know. First write their **names** or what you usually call them. Then for each person you name write **who they are**. For each person you name write **how old you think they are**. Then write **how often you see them** and **where you usually see them**.

What are their names?	Who are they?	How old do you think they are?	How often do you see them?	Where do you see them?
			1. almost every day	
			2. almost every week	
			3. almost every month	
			4. summers	
			5. once or twice a year	
			6. other	
Example:				
Mary	Grandma	80	#2	her house

SECTION III

What are some ways you would describe OLD PEOPLE?

Below are 11 pairs of words. For each pair place an **X** on one of the five lines that tells what you think about **old people.**

Look at the first pair. If you think that Old People are Very Good place an **X** on the first line under **Very**. If you think that Old People are A Little Good place an **X** on the second line under **A Little**. If you are not sure, place an **X** on the middle line under **Not Sure**. If you think that Old People are A Little Bad, place an **X** on the fourth line under **A Little** and if you think Old People are Very Bad, place an **X** on the last line under **Very**.

Now do this for all the questions. Read each item carefully before responding. *You may put down only one X for each word pair.*

OLD PEOPLE

	Very	A Little	Not sure	A Little	Very	
1. Good	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Bad
2. Unpleasant	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pleasant
3. Happy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Sad
4. Slow	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Fast
5. Pretty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ugly
6. Dull	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Exciting
7. Clean	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dirty
8. Cruel	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Kind
9. Wise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Foolish
10. Hated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Loved
11. Honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dishonest

SECTION IV

For some of these next questions you will need to write a few words. For some others, **Mark an X** next to the answer you choose.

1. Who is the oldest person you know? _____

2. How old do you think this person is? _____

3. How do you think this person feels to be old?

4. Do you have grandparents? Yes_____ No_____
(If your answer is No, then do not answer the next four questions.)

5. How often do you see your grandparents?
(Check the one that is correct.)

_____ Almost every day _____ Almost every week _____ Almost every month

_____ Summers _____ Once or twice a year _____ I live with them

6. What do you do with your grandparents when you are with them?

7. How often do you talk to your grandparents on the telephone?
(Check the one that is correct.)

_____ Almost every day _____ Almost every week _____ Almost every month

_____ Summers _____ Once or twice a year _____ I live with them

8. a) Are your grandparents old? Yes_____ No_____

b) What are the ages of your grandmother?_____ _____

grandfather? _____ _____

9. Do you have great-grandparents? Yes_____ No_____
(If your answer is No, then do not answer the next four questions.)

10. How often do you see your great-grandparents?
(Check the one that is correct.)

_____ Almost every day _____ Almost every week _____ Almost every month

_____ Summers _____ Once or twice a year _____ I live with them

11. What do you do with your great-grandparents when you are with them?

12. How often do you talk to your great-grandparents on the telephone?
(Check the one that is correct.)

_____ Almost every day _____ Almost every week _____ Almost every month

_____ Summers _____ Once or twice a year _____ I live with them

13. a) Are your great-grandparents old? Yes_____ No_____

b) What are the ages of your great-grandmother?_____ _____

great-grandfather? _____ _____

SECTION V

Now I would like to ask you some questions about having an old person in your classroom.

For each question 1-8, mark an **X** next to **Yes** if you think an old person could do this with you. Mark an **X** next to **No** if you think an old person could not do this with you.

1. Do you think an old person could:

   a) Teach you? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

   b) Help you with your work? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

   c) Become your friend? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

2. If an old person came to your classroom do you think he/she might:

   a) Be mean to you? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

   b) Teach you the wrong answers? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

   c) Just get in your way? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

   d) Bore you with dull stories? Yes_____ No_____ I don't know_____

3. Why do you think an old person would like to come to your classroom?

a) To teach children Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

b) To help children Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

c) Because they like children Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

d) To make them feel useful Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

e) Because they are lonely Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

f) Because they have nothing else to do Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

4. Would you like having an old person in your classroom as a helper?

Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

5. Would you go to an old person if you had a problem during school time?

Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

6. Do you think an old person might need help in getting used to your classroom?

Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

a) If you said **Yes**, what kind of help might they need?

b) Would you be willing to provide that help?

Yes_____ No_____I don't know_____

SECTION VI

What are some ways you would describe **Young People**?

Below are 11 pairs of words. For each pair place an **X** on one of the five lines that tells you what you think about **young people.**

Look at the first pair. If you think that Young People are Very Good place an **X** on the first line under **Very**. If you think that Young People are A Little Good place an **X** on the second line under **A Little**. If you are not sure, place an **X** on the middle line under **Not Sure**. If you think that Young People are A Little Bad, place an **X** on the fourth line under **A Little** and if you think Young People are Very Bad, place an **X** on the last line under **Very**.

Now do this for all the questions. Read each item carefully before responding. *You may put down only one X for each word pair.*

YOUNG PEOPLE

	Very	A Little	Not Sure	A Little	Very	
1. Good	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Bad
2. Unpleasant	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Pleasant
3. Happy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Sad
4. Slow	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Fast
5. Pretty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ugly
6. Dull	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Exciting
7. Clean	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dirty
8. Cruel	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Kind
9. Wise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Foolish
10. Hated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Loved
11. Honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dishonest

APPENDIX A: SCORING

The following response categories for the open-ended questions have been formed with the consideration that they be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. They were created through a random selection for the entire sample of responses from the pre-test to precisely describe the subjects' individual responses with no attempt at rater evaluation.

SECTION I

1. a) How can you tell when people are growing old?

Response Categories

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities
C. Physiological decline
D. Objective physical characteristics
E. Other (objective comments)

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

Exemplary Responses

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

They help you.
They get more mature.
They get wise/nice.

B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities

Their face is ugly.
They can't get a job.
When they start getting lonely, they get mean.

C. Physiological decline

They get weak. They shake
Cannot walk good/have back problems.
Hard of hearing.

D. Objective physical characteristics

Hair turns gray	Voice is shaky
Wrinkles on face/hands	The way they walk
By their hands/skin	They have a cane

E. Other (objective comments)

By how old they are.
Their looks.
The way they dress.
Their form of entertainment.

1. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value:

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)
These scores are summed and trends determined.

2. a) How do you think it feels to be an old person?

Response Categories

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*
C. Mixed responses
D. Other (objective comments)

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

Exemplary Responses

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

Good/Wonderful	Will be fun
Important/Helpful	Happy/Nice/Funny

B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*

Bad/Lonely/Sad	Grumbly
Weird/Scared	Unwanted
Rundown/Feels lazy	Need help/Helpless
Can't walk good	You'll die soon
Not good, can't get a job	Slower
People don't care about you	Don't enjoy life as much anymore
Uncomfortable	Can't do anything

C. Mixed responses

Sometimes good, sometimes bad

D. Other (objective comments)

Different
Old
No different than young

2. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value:

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)

These scores are summed and trends determined.

3. a) What do you think happens when you get to be an old person?

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*
C. Physical decline
D. You die
E. Objective physical characteristics
F. Social withdrawal
G. Other

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

Exemplary Responses

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

Can do more things
You can drive
Do not have to work
Become a parent
Get bigger
Travel a lot

B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*

You get gloomy
Don't have as much fun
Get lonesome/lonely
Kids call you names
Sad and you want to be a teenager again and have friends
Nobody cares
Scared
Get mean
Life goes to waste

C. Physical decline

Cannot do as much	Get weaker/sicker/slower
Sick/can't run	Hard to work
Bones hurt	Can't work
Need help	Won't be able to move

D. You die

You die/Days are almost over/Get ready to die

E. Objective physical characteristics

Gray hair	Wrinkles/Teeth fall out
Use a cane	Walk slower

F. Social withdrawal

Sit in a rocking chair	Nothing/Quit your job
Only watch TV	

G. Other

Feel different	Get older

3. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value:

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)
These scores are summed and trends determined.

5. a) What do you think you will be like when you are old?

Response Categories

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*
C. Objective physical characteristics
D. Mixed responses
E. Other

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

Exemplary Responses

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

Nice old lady	Good citizens/helpful
Kind/Friendly	Active/OK
Needed	Neat/Clean

B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*

A Helpless person that sits in a rocking chair	Can't walk/Need help
Scared/Weird	Can't work or play
Will look ugly	Very weak/lazy/poor
Grouchy/Mean/Mad	Unhelpful/Crippled
Not fun/Not good/Sad	Lonesome/Afraid
Not as good as young	Senile

C. Objective physical characteristics

Gray hair/No teeth/Wrinkles
Have a beard/Get fat
Will die soon
Will have a cane or walker

D. Mixed responses
Good and bad

E. Other
Very young/Very old

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

5. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value:

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)

These scores are summed and trends determined .

6. a) How do you think you will feel when you are old?

<u>Response Categories</u>

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*
C. Mixed responses
D. Other

<u>Exemplary Responses</u>

A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

OK/Good	Needed
Happy/Nice/Proud	Active
Relaxes	

B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*

Horrible/Miserable/Terrible/Awful
Sad/Bad/Sick/Cranky/Mean
Will feel left out
Aches and pains
Will feel out of place
Weak/Tired
Will have to stay in the house
Won't be fun
Young people will make fun of of you

C. Mixed responses

Lonesome and scary but friendly
Sometimes bad and sometimes good

D. Other

Will be old
Will feel older
Different

6. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value:

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)

These scores are summed and trends determined.

7. a) What do you think you will do when you are old?

Response Categories

A. Social Participation
B. Social Withdrawal
C. Other
D. Don't Know

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

Exemplary Responses

A. Social Participation

Swim
Be awful nice
Open up a business
Be a teacher
Be someone you can love
Buy my grandchildren toys
Visit my grandchildren
Try to stay healthy and active
Help people
Bake a lot
Visit friends
Love
Travel a lot

I will go on roller-coasters and not be in a rocking chair all my life.

B. Social Withdrawal

Sit around all day/Sit in a rocking chair	Watch TV
Sit on the porch	Go to an old folks home
Nothing	Die when I get too old
Stay home all day	Cry a lot
Lose all my friends	Go to bed all day

I would be sick and sit around all day because old people are sick.

C. Other

Be a Senior Citizen
Take it easy/Vacation/Retire
Walk around the neighborhood

D. Don't Know

7. b) Each answer choice is to be given a numerical value

a good thing to happen? = 1 (positive)
a bad thing to happen? = 3 (negative)
neither good nor bad? = 2 (neutral)

These scores are summed and trends determined.

SECTION II

Question about the old people children know: Who are they? Where do you see them?

Response Categories: Who are they?

A. Grandparent
B. Other Relative
C. Neighbor
D. Friend
E. Senior Citizen Volunteer
F. Teacher
G. Other

Response Categories: Where do you see them?

A. Child's home
B. Old person's home
C. In the neighborhood (church, store, etc.)
D. School
E. Other (mall, library, etc.)

SECTION III

Semantic Differential

Each response is to be given a numerical value:

Very	=	1
A Little	=	2
Not Sure	=	3
A Little	=	4
Very	=	5

These scores are summed and trends determined.

SECTION IV

1. Who is the oldest person you know?

   Response Categories:

   A. Grandparent/Great-grandparent
   B. Other relative
   C. Other (person's name)
   D. Senior Citizen Volunteer

2. How old do you think this person is?

3. How do you think this person feels to be old?

   Response Categories:
   A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities
   B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities
   C. Mixed Responses
   D. Other

   Exemplary Responses

   A. Positive Psychological/Physical Qualities

      OK, She thinks its nothing to cry about.
      She likes/Happy/Nice/Active

   B. Negative Psychological/Physical Qualities*

      Sad/Lousy
      Terrible/Unhappy
      Lonesome
      Not so great
      Wants to be young again

* Responses for category "Negative Psychological/ Physical Qualities" are substantially more negatively charged than responses for the same category for the question about old age in general (i.e., "Horrible, Miserable, Terrible" vs. "Bad, Lonely Lazy".)

C. Mixed Responses

OK, but sick.

D. Other

6. What do you do with your grandparents when you are with them?

and

11. What do you do with your great-grandparents when you are with them?

Response Categories:

A. Talk
B. Talk about the past
C. Go places
D. Play games
E. Help them
F. Other

Exemplary Response

A. Talk
B. Talk about the past
D. Go places
   Go to the store with them
   Go to the movies
   Go on vacations with them
   Go out to dinner
   Go on walks

D. Play games
   Play catch/cards
   Fish/Sew/Bake
   Play games and watch TV

E. Help them
   Help them with their shopping
   Help them with stairs

F. Other

SECTION V

6. Do you think an old person might need help in getting used to your classroom?

7. a) If you said **Yes**, what kind of help might they need?

Response Categories

A. Getting acquainted with children
B. Adjusting to classroom
C. Help (personal)
D. Help (subjects)

Exemplary Responses

A. Getting acquainted with children
   Learning kids' names
   Making friends

B. Adjusting to classroom
   Getting used to noise/things/schedules
   Finding things

C. Help (personal)
   Help them walk around
   Help them to be friendly
   Help them from being lonesome

D. Help (subjects)
   Help with reading/math

SECTION VI

Semantic Differential

Each response is to be given a numerical value:

Very	=	1
A Little	=	2
Not Sure	=	3
A Little	=	4
Very	=	5

These scores are summed and trends determined.

APPENDIX B: ANALYSES

The following procedures were used to answer the questions and address the hypotheses in the study.

Question 1: What is the cognitive/descriptive content of children's attitudes toward the elderly?

The pre-test data prior to the subjects' exposure to the experimental intervention was used to determine the cognitive beliefs children possess about the elderly. Frequencies of responses to the open-ended cognitive oriented questions were examined. The response categories to these questions represented descriptive information of all the responses children made relative to the information they have about aging. Accordingly, through a frequency count, the cognitive component of the children's attitudes toward the elderly was assessed.

The multiple component questions regarding the children's beliefs around having an elderly person in their classroom have been formed into four scales, two of which represent the extent to which they recognize the potential value of having an elderly person in their classroom, and two of which represent their perceptions of an elderly person's motivations for coming to the classroom. The inter-item reliability of these four scales has been tested and found to have alpha coefficients equal to .56 and .70 for the first two, and .58 and .60 for the second two.

Question 2: Are children's perceptions (affect) of the elderly predominately negative, positive, or some combination of these two?

While the previous analysis addressed the cognitive content of children's attitudes, it is incomplete without including values associated with the cognitive content. The "values" questions which immediately follow the open-ended cognitive questions provide this (Section I: 1b, 2b, 3b, 5b, 6b, 7b). Each question referring to the previous informational question was viewed separately to provide the children's judgment of his/her response.

This was accomplished through a cross-tabular procedure with a chi-square analysis to determine statistical significance.

The six affective items have been formed into two scales to provide an assessment of the overall affect associated with (a) children's perceptions of the elderly, and (b) the perception of their own anticipated old age. These two scales have been checked for their inter-item reliability with the alpha coefficients equal to .68 and .60, respectively.

To provide additional information on the cognitive and affective components of the children's attitudes, the semantic-differential material relative to "old people" as the attitude object (Section III) was divided into two additive scales representing (a) the affective dimension, and (b) the activity-potency dimension. Through this process, dimensions of the children's attitudes were ascertained and the relative weights of each established.

Question 3: What conation do children hold relative to interacting with elderly persons in their classroom?

A frequency count of the responses to the three conation questions (Section V: 1-3) provided the information to answer this question. These three questions were combined to form a conation scale so that subsequent analyses of the component of children's conative attitudes could be performed relative to other variables in the study. The inter-item reliability of the conation scale was tested and found to have an alpha coefficient equal to .65.

Question 4: What are the correlations between the attitudinal components of children's attitudes toward the elderly?

Pearson product-moment correlations were carried out on the attitude scales. The direction of the correlations and the significance levels were reported. This provided a measure of the relative associations of the attitude components.

Question 5: Are there differences in the attitudes children have of the elderly relative to selected demographic characteristics of the children (including age, sex, and race)?

To answer this question, each attitude component was treated as a dependent variable and processed through an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with sex, race, and age as three simultaneous independent variables. This was carried out separatenly for the two

experimental groups and the comparison group at the pre-test stage. Through this method, the main effects of the three independent variables and the interaction effects of the combinations of them were assessed.

Question 6: Is there a difference between the attitudes children express about the elderly and the attitudes they express about their anticipated old age?

A comparison of the frequencies of responses was performed between the cognitive and affect questions relative to "old age" in general (Section 1: 1-4) and relative to the child's anticipated old age (Section 1: 5-8.) Parallel questions from these two sections were submitted to a chi-square analysis to determine statistical significance.

A t test was carried out on the means from the two previously constructed affect scales. These two statistical comparisons were performed at the pre-test stage for each of the three groups of subjects.

Question 7: How do children's attitudes toward the elderly differ from their attitudes toward young people?

T tests were performed at the pre-test stage for each of the items of the semantic-differential (Section VI.) The comparisons tested for the differences in the way in which children described "old people" relative to "young people."

Question 8: What differences will be seen in children's attitudes toward the elderly between those children with regular grandparent contact and in those children without this form of contact?

Separate Kendall rank-order correlations were performed with the various attitude scales and the frequency of grandparent contact (Section IV.) The direction, strength, and significance levels were reported. These correlations were carried out separately for the three groups of subjects on the pre-test data. Through the use of the correlation coefficients, the degree of grandparent contact was assessed for its impact on the children's attitudes.

A further analysis was performed using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the attitude scales as the dependent variables and like amounts of grandparent contact, along with select demographic variables as simultaneous independent variables. This procedure allowed for an assessment of the main effects of grandparent contact on the

children's attitudes and any interaction effects of grandparent contact with variables such as sex or age.

Question 9: What will be the effects of differential amounts of contact with elderly persons outside of the child's classroom on their attitudes toward the elderly?

The section of the children's attitude survey which provides information on the number of old people the child knows and the frequency of contact was used for this analysis (Section III) Kendall rank-order correlations were used to establish whether this measure of "old people contact" is associated with the children's expressed attitudes using the various attitude scales.

Hypothesis 1: Children who have had regular weekly contact with an elderly person in their classroom will express more positive attitudes toward the elderly compared with those children who have not had this form of contact.

Based on the previous analyses, several specific factors were identified which are significantly related to children's attitudes. Therefore, an analysis of the subjects' attitudes relative to their contact with the elderly volunteer in the classroom should not proceed without a simultaneous consideration of these "third" variables. Accordingly, the primary method of analysis will be several n way analyses of variance procedures to be performed with the various attitude scales as the dependent variables, the elderly volunteer school contact (with multiple levels) as the main independent variable and the earlier identified third factors as additional and simultaneous independent variables.

Further analysis will include computing the mean change scores from the pre-test to the post-test on the scales of the semantic-differential and the use of t tests carried out between the experimental groups and the comparison group.

The primary method of analysis used to test this hypothesis was several one, two, and three-way analyses of variance procedures. The seven attitude scales were employed as the dependent variables with the elderly school volunteer contact (experimental intervention) as the independent variable. Post-hoc comparisons between the means for the two experimental groups and the comparison group on the seven attitude scales were performed using Fisher's LSD procedure.

Profile comparisons of the scores at the post-test on the seven attitude scales and the semantic-differential scales were tested for significance using the sign test.

Comparisons were made between the experimental groups and comparison group, and between the groups with varying levels of elderly contact in the school.

Further analysis included computing the mean change scores from the pre-test to the post-test for the seven attitude scales and testing for differences between the three groups using the analysis of variance procedure.

Hypothesis 2: Children completing their second year of regular contact with an elderly person in their classroom will express more positive attitudes toward the elderly compared to children completing their first year of this contact.

This hypothesis represents a further test of the social-contact hypothesis tested in Hypothesis 1. Similar procedures were carried out but limited to the two experimental groups. Both the n way analysis of variance and t tests were utilized.

APPENDIX C: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

Children's Attitude Survey

This instrument was designed for the present study with the consideration of age-appropriateness and to yield information on:

(1) The descriptive content of children's attitudes toward old age.[2]

(2) The cognitive, affective and conative components of these attitudes.

(3) Children's real experiences with old people, including grandparents and other contact with elderly persons (see Appendix A.)

This was accomplished through open- and closed-ended questions, and the use of five-point semantic-differential scales.

Through a series of open-ended questions, subjects provided cognitive information on their beliefs about the process of aging and on being old in general (Section 1: 1a, 2a, 3a.) They were then asked to anticipate their own old age with the instruction, "Now imagine that you are old" and provide cognitive information with this in mind (Section 1: 6a, 7a.) Each of these six questions was followed by a closed-ended question with three possible responses requesting the child to evaluate the response he or she had just made (Section 1: 1b, 2b, 3b, 5b, 6b, 7b.) Thus, each time the child offered a descriptive/cognitive response to some aspect of old age (in general, or anticipating his or her own old aging), it was immediately evaluated by the child providing the affective counterpart to his or her beliefs.

Directly following each of these sections was a question which probed where the child learned the information he/she had just reported (Section 1: 4 and 8.) Responses to each question included the media and various persons (grandparents, parents, friends, etc.)

---

2 The use of the word "old" was used consistently on the survey to refer to the elderly. Its use was preferred here rather than words such as older, which may be considered a relative term, or elderly, which may have presented conceptualambiguity to the younger children.

This was followed by a series of questions which asked the child to identify specifically the "old people" he/she knows. For each person identified, information was gathered from the child on:

(1) the relationship of this person to the child,

(2) how old the child perceives this person to be,

(3) the frequency in which they see them,

(4) where this interaction occurs.

This section was intended to examine children's real experiences (and exposure) told old persons presumably outside of the school environment. Also, the information from this section was intended to yield measures of the child's ability to provide a chronological assessment of old age. Moreover, the information allowed for the ability to assess the contact children have with elderly persons and its relationship to their expressed attitudes.

Grandparent contact has been considered to be a relevant factor on children's development of attitudes towards old age. For this reason, information on grandparent and great-grandparent contact was collected (Section IV: 4-8 and 9-13.) This included assessments of the frequency of personal and telephone contact and typical activities children engage in with these persons. In addition, the children were asked to evaluate whether they believe these persons are "old," which may result in modifying the effect of grandparent contact on attitudes toward the elderly.

As a further means to assess children's cognitive beliefs of the elderly, three additional multi-component questions were included. These questions explored the children's cognitive beliefs in direct relation to the extent to which they view the elderly as a potentially valuable member of the classroom environment, as someone who could contribute to their learning and the motivations that an elderly person might have for coming to the classroom (Section V: 1-3.)

The conative component of children's attitudes were explored through as series of questions designed to measure the children's interest and willingness to interact with an elderly person in the classroom (Section V: 4-6.) They were considered to measure the behavioral tendencies of the children relative to an elderly person.

Response Categories

Responses to the open-ended questions in this instrument have been placed into categories formed by first taking a random selection of completed pre-test questionnaires and constructing appropriate categories with the considerations of exhaustiveness and that they be mutually exclusive. It was also considered essential that categories describe as precisely as possible the individual responses with no attempt at rater evaluations. This consideration was important in that the children's responses to the open-ended questions were designed to allow inferences to be made primarily regarding the cognitive information they hold around aging. The process for assessing the children's evaluations of this materials was carried out more directly as discussed earlier. Categories for all open-ended questions and exemplary responses appear in Appendix A.

In the present study the semantic-differential consisted of eleven bipolar sets of adjectives of attributes or behavioral characteristics of persons of all ages. The eleven sets of adjectives were placed within the framework of a five-point scale with the polarity of the scales balanced with half of the positive and negative poles on each side. The objective of the scales was to determine the valences of children's stereotypic attitudes and the content of dimensions of such attitudes. The eleven scales were presented twice to the subjects: the first time with the directions that they were to respond so as to "describe old people" and the second time to "describe young people."

The repetition of the scales provided the opportunity for a comparative analysis of children's attitude dimensions between "old people" and "young people" as the attitude object.

The eleven bipolar scales consist of adjectives utilized in previous studies as well as those created by the researcher. Previous factor analyses of semantic-differential material have revealed that dimensions represented by the present adjectives include those of the affective and evaluative dimensions, activity-potency, person acceptability-unacceptability, autonomous-dependent, and instrument-ineffective (Rosencranz and McNevin, 1969)

Teacher Rating of Frequency of Volunteer Contact

At the conclusion of the school year (May, 1980), all participating teachers in the experimental groups were asked to judge the frequency of contact each child had with their respective senior citizen classroom volunteer. This consisted of first having the teacher indicate the approximate number of half days the volunteer was in attendance in the classroom. The range of possible values included "less than 16 half days," "16 to 20," "21 to 25," "26 to 30," and "more than 30 half days." Teachers then recorded the regularity of student contact with he volunteer for each child in the class. A five-point scale was utilized with values ranging from "little or no interaction" to "large amount of interaction."

This information provided the opportunity for a refinement of the experimental intervention. That is, in addition to knowing whether or not a child was exposed to the volunteer, information was available on the level of his/her exposure.

REFERENCES

Falchikov, N. (1990). Youthful ideas about old age: an analysis of children's drawings. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 31(2), 79-99.

Fillmer, H. (1984). Children's descriptions of and attitudes toward the elderly. *Educational Gerontology*, 10, 99-107.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: an introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Isaacs, L. W., & Bearison, D. J. (1986). The development of children's prejudice against the aged. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 23(3), 175-194.

Kite, M. E., & Johnson, B. T. (1988). Attitudes toward older and younger adults: a meta-analysis. *Psychology and Aging*, 3(3), 233-244.

Laws, G. (1995). Understanding ageism: lessons from feminism and postmodernism. *The Gerontologist*, 35(2), 112-118.

Marks, R.E. (1980). *Children's perceptions of the elderly: a Quasi-experimental study of attitudes and attitude change*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 249 pp.

Marks, R., Newman, S., & Onawola, R. (1985). Latency-aged children's views on aging. *Educational Gerontology*, 11(203), 89-99.

McTavish, D. G. (1971). Perceptions of old people: a review of research methodologies and findings. *The Gerontologist*, 11, 90-101.

Newman, S. (1985, November). A curriculum on aging in our schools: its time has come. Paper presented at the Bridging the Gap Conference, New York, NY.

Pickett, J. M., Petty, R. E., Cacioppo, J. T., & Fisher, D. L. (1983). The relative impact of age and attractiveness stereotypes on persuasion. *Journal of Gerontology*, 18, 340-343.

Rosencranz, H.A. & McNevin, T.E. (1969). A factor analysis of attitudes toward the aged. *The Gerontologist*, 9(1), 55-59.

Seefeldt, C., Jantz, R. K., Galper, A., & Serock, K. (1977). Using pictures to explore children's attitudes toward the elderly. *The Gerontologist*, 17(6), 506-512.